

Public Law 96-331  
96th Congress

An Act

To authorize the Secretary of Commerce to charter the nuclear ship Savannah to Patriots Point Development Authority, an agency of the State of South Carolina.

Aug. 28, 1980

[S. 1863]

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That the Secretary of Commerce is authorized within one year after enactment of this Act, to charter the nuclear ship Savannah to Patriots Point Development Authority, without monetary consideration, for a minimum of five years and a maximum of thirty years, with options to renew for five-year periods thereafter, for use as a museum ship and for other public purposes, but not for transportation, together with such of her fixtures, tackle, apparel, furnishings, and equipment as the Secretary of Commerce, in the Secretary's discretion, determines.

Savannah,  
charter to  
Patriots Point  
Development  
Authority.

SEC. 2. The charter authorized by section 1 shall include a provision that—

(a) the Secretary of Commerce shall be responsible for inspection and maintenance of the hull below the waterline and that Patriots Point Development Authority shall be responsible for all other maintenance, including the paying for the electrical power for the cathodic hull protection system;

Inspection and  
maintenance.

(b) the Patriots Point Development Authority shall save the United States harmless from all liability with respect to the vessel;

Liability.

(c) the Patriots Point Development Authority shall return the vessel to the Secretary of Commerce at the termination of the charter or any renewal thereof in the same condition, fair wear and tear excepted, as when the charter was entered into; and

Termination.

(d) the Patriots Point Development Authority shall obtain such insurance and provide such other assurances as the Secretary of Commerce may require to carry out its obligations under this Act.

Insurance.

SEC. 3. The Secretary of Commerce, acting for the United States Government as owner of the vessel, and Patriots Point Development Authority shall apply to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a license to possess but not to operate the nuclear utilization facility under which the sole liability of the Secretary of Commerce shall be that the Secretary will bear the financial responsibility for the ultimate disposal of the reactor and other nuclear systems and radioactive contaminated components in the vessel in accordance with a plan which the Secretary of Commerce will submit at the time the reactor, nuclear systems, and radioactive components are to be disposed of and which is then approved by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission as required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954. The Authority shall be responsible for compliance with the license for the monitoring and security of the reactor and all nuclear systems and radioactive components in the vessel and for filing all reports that may be required as the licensee.

License.  
Nuclear  
disposal.

42 USC 2011  
note.  
Reports.

Appropriation  
authorizations.

SEC. 4. Any funds appropriated pursuant to authorizations contained in the Acts of October 21, 1975 (89 Stat. 611; Public Law 94-121), July 14, 1976 (90 Stat. 937; Public Law 94-362), August 2, 1977 (91 Stat. 419; Public Law 95-86), and October 10, 1978 (92 Stat. 1021; Public Law 95-431) are authorized to be used for preservation work on the nuclear ship Savannah. Expenditures authorized by the preceding sentence for the preservation of the nuclear ship Savannah shall not exceed that amount which the Secretary of Commerce, in the Secretary's discretion, determines to be necessary to make the vessel suitable for use by the Patriots Point Development Authority pursuant to section 1 of this Act. No part of any funds authorized to be expended by this section shall be obligated or expended except in connection with work which the Secretary of Commerce determines would otherwise be performed on the nuclear ship Savannah if the vessel were to be laid up in the National Defense Reserve Fleet pursuant to section 11 of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 (60 Stat. 49).

50 USC app.  
1744.  
Appropriation  
authorization.

SEC. 5. Funds appropriated pursuant to authorizations contained in title III of the Act of September 24, 1979 (93 Stat. 416; Public Law 96-68), are authorized to be expended to tow the nuclear ship Savannah to a site at Patriots Point at Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Beginning in fiscal year 1981 there are authorized to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to inspect and maintain the hull of the nuclear ship Savannah below the waterline during the term of the charter and any renewals thereof.

Approved August 28, 1980.

#### LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORT No. 96-1220 accompanying H.R. 5867 (Comm. on Merchant Marine and Fisheries).

SENATE REPORT No. 96-478 (Comm. on Commerce, Science, and Transportation).

#### CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 125 (1979): Dec. 18, considered and passed Senate.

Vol. 126 (1980): Aug. 18, considered and passed House, in lieu of H.R. 5867.